

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 91

(By Delegates Brown, Fleischauer, Poore, Barker, Guthrie, Caputo,
Manypenny, Marshall, Longstreth, Hall, Perdue, M. Poling,
Fragale, Frazier, Doyle, Moore, Hatfield, Hunt, Wells, Cowles,
Morgan and Stowers)

Requesting the Legislature of the State of West Virginia to
communicate with the executive and legislative branch of the
United States Government in order to encourage the
ratification of the United Nations Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

WHEREAS, On December 18, 1979, the Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was
adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and after the
twentieth nation ratified the convention on September 3, 1981, it
became an international treaty; and

WHEREAS, The treaty brings the female half of humanity into the
focus of human rights concerns and establishes not only an
international bill of rights for women but also an agenda for
action by countries to guarantee those rights; and

WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to creating
conditions within which women can exercise and enjoy basic rights
and freedoms; and

WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to affirmative
action for women until parity with men is reached; and

WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to abolishing all

1 forms of slavery and prostitution of women; and

2 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to securing
3 women's right to vote, to stand for election and to hold public
4 office; and

5 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to providing equal
6 opportunity for women to represent their countries internationally;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to allowing women
9 the right to change or retain their nationality and that of their
10 children, regardless of marital status; and

11 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to ensuring girls'
12 and womens' equal access to quality education in all subjects and
13 at all levels including continuing and vocational programs for
14 women; and

15 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to ensuring equal
16 employment, vocational and promotion opportunities, job security
17 and equal pay for work of equal value; and

18 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to ensuring that
19 women who are married, pregnant or have children have the right to
20 work and the right to maternity leave and other appropriate
21 benefits; and

22 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to ensuring that
23 child care is available and that pregnant women are protected from
24 work that may be hazardous to their health or the health of their

1 future children; and

2 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to providing
3 adequate health services to women including family planning, where
4 necessary, and prenatal care including nutrition for pregnant and
5 lactating mothers; and

6 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to ensuring access
7 to financial credit for women; and

8 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to ensuring the
9 right of women to participate in recreational, cultural and
10 athletic activities; and

11 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to giving special
12 attention to all the provisions of the treaty to women who reside
13 in rural areas; and

14 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to ensuring women
15 equal rights in choosing a spouse, name, or occupation; to marry
16 and divorce; to own, buy, sell, and administer property; to share
17 parenting roles regardless of marital status; and, to choose the
18 number and spacing of their children including adoption or
19 guardianship; and

20 WHEREAS, Ratifying governments are committed to establishing a
21 minimum age for marriage and to ensuring that all marriages are
22 entered into freely, by mutual consent; and

23 WHEREAS, In 1979, after the United Nations General Assembly
24 adopted the treaty, President James Carter sent it to the Senate

1 Foreign Relations Committee for ratification where it was
2 subsequently approved by the committee with bipartisan support but
3 never scheduled for a vote on the Senate floor because such
4 treaties require a two-thirds vote of support; and

5 WHEREAS, Over six million women are beaten by their husbands or
6 boyfriends each year in the United States and one million five-
7 hundred thousand of these die from their injuries; and

8 WHEREAS, One hundred eighty-six countries have ratified the
9 treaty; and

10 WHEREAS, The United States of America is considered by many
11 nations to be the leader of the democratic societies of the world
12 and the leading proponent of human rights yet the United States of
13 America is the only industrialized nation in the world that has not
14 ratified the treaty; and

15 WHEREAS, President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary
16 Clinton should be strongly urged to place the treaty in the highest
17 category of priority to accelerate its passage through the Senate
18 Foreign Relations Committee; and

19 WHEREAS, The Legislature should exhort the Senate Foreign
20 Relations Committee once again to pass the treaty favorably out of
21 committee as soon as possible; therefore, be it

22 *Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

23 That the Legislature of the State of West Virginia requests
24 the United States Congress to ratify, and President Obama to sign,

1 the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of
2 Discrimination Against Women; and be it

3 *Further Resolved,* That the Legislature of the State of West
4 Virginia respectfully requests the Congress and the President to
5 enact appropriate legislation that would address the concerns set
6 forth in this measure; and be it

7 *Further Resolved,* That the Clerk of the House of Delegates
8 transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice
9 President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of
10 Representatives, the Majority Leader of the Senate, the Senate
11 Committee on Foreign Relations, the House Committee on Foreign
12 Affairs and to each Senator and Representative from West Virginia
13 in the Congress of the United States.